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SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

STATE FOR AF/E, AF/EPS, EB/IFD, EB/ODF  
LONDON AND PARIS FOR AFRICA WATCHERS  
TREASURY FOR ANNE ALIKONIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EAID](#) [ECIN](#) [ECON](#) [PGOV](#) [SOCI](#) [KE](#) [NEPAD](#) [APRM](#)

SUBJECT: KENYA/NEPAD: KENYA COMPLETES APRM SELF-ASSESSMENT  
REPORT ON GOVERNANCE

Ref: Nairobi 868

Sensitive-but-unclassified. Not for release outside USG channels.

1. (SBU) Summary: Kenya has completed its African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) self-assessment report. A follow-on visit by an external APRM review team confirmed that the report was carried out transparently, with broad stakeholder participation, and without undue government interference. The next step in the APRM process for Kenya involves the formal presentation in late December to the Kenyan president of the self-assessment and review team reports, together with an action plan for implementing the recommendations for reform emanating from those documents. While the APRM in Kenya's case is providing a useful conduit for citizens to criticize their government and the way they are governed, it appears to be more about process than tangible results. End summary.

2. (U) Though late by several months, Kenya has completed the self-assessment launched in February under the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM). Reftel provides background on Kenya's APRM effort, which springs from the AU's New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). Under the APRM, Kenya is one of the first four countries of 24 to subject itself to self-assessment, along with Ghana (completed), Rwanda (completed), and Mauritius (pending shortly). Nigeria is also reported to be undergoing a self-assessment due for completion in December, and South Africa has just launched its self-assessment.

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Self-Assessment: An Audit on Governance  
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3. (U) Kenya's self-assessment, described reftel as "an audit on how we are governing ourselves today," aimed to gather and collate the views of a wide array of Kenyan "stakeholders" on the country's (and especially the government's) performance in four thematic areas:

- Democracy and Political Governance;
- Socio-Economic Development;
- Macro-economic Governance;
- Corporate Governance.

4. (U) The self-assessment was conducted on the ground by four local independent think tanks each of which covered one thematic area. The data collection consisted of provincial fora (akin to townhall meetings), focus group discussions at the district level, household-based surveys, and interviews with experts and opinion leaders around the country. The effort was overseen by a 33-member APRM Governing Council and a full-time NEPAD Secretariat based in the Ministry of Planning and National Development. It ran on a KSh 65 million (\$867,000) budget funded roughly half by the government and half by donors, including the UK and UNDP. All disbursements were administered by UNDP for greater transparency and accountability.

5. (SBU) Embassy Econ/C attended the day-long "National Stakeholders Forum" which brought together around a thousand delegates from around the country on September 16. The forum marked the end of the self-assessment phase of the APRM, and culminated in the adoption of the several hundred page self-assessment report, as well as a National Program of Action, with the latter listing recommendations for specific reforms based on the findings of the former.

6. (U) Neither document is yet available publicly, but summaries of each indicate the exercise provided a genuine opportunity for Kenyan citizens to criticize and voice concerns about how they are governed. According to press reports, the self-assessment report highlights that an overwhelming majority of Kenyans see corruption as a major problem for development and that over two thirds believe their government lacks the political will to fight

corruption. The summary recommendations range from the hopelessly broad ("Create an enabling environment for political participation of all citizens") to the more usefully specific ("Modernize information management systems in the Judiciary").

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Self-Assessment Gets Assessed - Externally  
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17. (U) The completion of the self-assessment report was followed quickly on October 2 by the arrival of an 18-person strong delegation led by Mozambican educator Graca Machel, spouse of former South African President Nelson Mandela (who accompanied her) and a member of the 7-person Panel of Eminent Persons supervising the APRM initiative continent-wide. The purpose of the nearly two-week long visit was to verify and assess the methodologies and findings of Kenya's self-assessment report.

18. (SBU) Machel's external review team confirmed the sentiments of local observers and diplomats that the self-assessment was carried out in a professional, impartial manner without government interference. Briefing donors on October 13, she said the self-assessment was "very candid, very open" both in terms of the report, and in the follow-up discussions her team was holding around the country. Upon her departure the next day, Machal went so far in her praise of Kenya's self-assessment process that she claimed it was one-sided in not sufficiently noting the country's strengths.

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Rumors of Interference Prove False  
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19. (SBU) The only snafu in Kenya's self-assessment process occurred in August when the Chairperson of the country's APRM Governing Council attempted to sue the Minister of Planning and National Development after being dismissed along with two allies on the council for attempting to gain direct access to APRM funding, held in an account by the UNDP. Details remain hazy, but in the end, the suit was thrown out of court, and the 30 other Council members sided firmly with the Ministry. It would appear that the Chair, the colorful Orie Rogo Manduli of the National Council for NGOs, either misunderstood the Council's role in how the self-assessment was to be conducted, or was simply trying to make a power play for control of the budget for her own ends. Leading donors, including the UK, concur that the government acted properly in dismissing Manduli and did not interfere in the substance of the self-assessment effort.

110. (SBU) As noted reftel, the APRM process is somewhat convoluted and long-winded. In her briefing for donors, Graca Machal reviewed the next steps in the process for Kenya:

- The external APRM team will write its report on Kenya's self-assessment, probably end October/early November.
- This report, with the self-assessment attached, will be submitted for comments to the Kenyan president and the country's APRM Governing Council.
- In late December, the final report will be presented by the lead panelist (Machal presumably) to the Kenyan president at the APRM Forum in Abuja. At this stage, the entire APRM report and self-assessment will become a public document.
- Thereafter, with the report completed and now public, the Kenyan leadership should mobilize support domestically for implementation of the recommendations contained in the report's National Program of Action.
- Kenya's self-assessment report and its implementation of the action program will undergo "peer review" at the next APRM forum, which will take place early in 2006.

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Comment  
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111. (SBU) In her briefing for donors, Machal argued that the process of the APRM self-assessment is valuable in and of itself because it provides a conduit for direct dialogue between governments and their citizens. This is indeed a positive outcome of Kenya's APRM self-assessment, which by all accounts was conducted in a thoroughly transparent manner, free from government interference or sugar-coating. The results are candid and frank. But overall, we wonder whether the APRM will ever lead to tangible results, i.e. to the kind of specific economic and governance reforms that even casual observers understand are achievable now in Kenya, and are badly needed. In short, the APRM in our view fits a familiar pattern in Kenya - it's all about process, and not enough about results. In fact, in this as in other instances, we fear the process will be used as a smokescreen to cover up the failure of the political

leadership to achieve real progress in improving service delivery and reforming governance in Kenya.  
Bellamy